AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Replacement sheets 1-7 of Figures 1-7 are filed herewith. The replacement figures are formalized to be more aesthetically pleasing, and are not substantively altered.

REMARKS

Claims 2-44, 72-113, and 115-243 are pending. By this Amendment, Claims 2, 5, 8, 10-13, 22-23, 72, 74, 77, 79-82, 91-92, 115, 117, 120, 122-125 and 134-135 are amended, new Claims 155-243 added, and Claims 1, 71 and 114 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 45-70 were previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Replacement Sheets 1-7 of Figures 1-7 are also filed herewith. The figures are formalized to be more aesthetically pleasing and are not substantively altered.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication in the Office Action that Claims 5-10, 22-40, 74-79, 91-109, 117-122, and 134-152 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 5, 8, 10, 22-23, 74, 77, 79, 92, 117, 120, 122, and 135 are amended to place them into independent form and incorporate intervening claims. Claims 91 and 134 are also amended to place them into independent form, and correspond to allowable Claim 22.

All of the dependent claims depend variously from allowable Claims 5, 8, 10, 22-23, 74, 77, 79, 91-92, 117, 120, 122, and 134-135.

Dependent method Claims 2-4 and 11-21 have been amended to depend from Claim 8. New sets of dependent claims corresponding to Claims 2-4 and 11-21 have been added to depend from allowable Claims 10 and 23 (i.e., Claims 155-168, and 169-182). Parallel changes have been made with respect to the Beauregard and system claims. For example, dependent Beauregard Claims 72-73 and 80-90 have been amended to depend from Claim 77, and corresponding sets of dependent claims have been added to depend from Claims 79 and 92 (i.e., Claims 183-195,

196-213); dependent system Claims 115-116 and 123-133 have been amended to depend from Claim 120, and corresponding sets of dependent claims have been added to depend from Claims 122 and 135 (i.e., Claims 214-221, 222-234).

New dependent method Claims 235-237 respectively incorporate features from allowable Claims 5, 8 and 22, and depend from allowable Claim 10. Parallel changes have been made with respect to the Beauregard and system claims. For example, new dependent Beauregard Claims 238-240 respectively incorporate features from allowable Claims 74, 77, and 91, and depend from allowable Claim 79; new dependent system Claims 241-243 respectively incorporate features from allowable Claims 117, 120 and 134, and depend from allowable Claim 122.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1, 11-21, 71, 80-90, 114 and 123-133 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,760,721 to Chasen (Chasen). The Examiner also rejects Claims 2-4, 41-44, 72-73, 110-113, 115-116 and 153-154 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Chasen in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,630,092 to Carreiro et al. (Carreiro).

Applicants respectfully submit that these rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are obviated by the placement of allowable Claims 5, 8, 10, 22-23, 74, 77, 79, 91-92, 117, 120, 122, and 134-135 into independent form, and by the dependence of all remaining claims from one or more of these independent claims. In other words, Claims 5-10, 22-40, 74-79, 91-109, 117-122, and 134-152 contain allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner, and all remaining claims depend from one or more of Claims 5-10, 22-40, 74-79, 91-109, 117-122, and 134-152.

Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration on the merits and prompt allowance are respectfully requested. In the event any questions arise regarding this communication or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

Date: 18 January 2005   By: _____

M. David Ream
Registration No. 35,333

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620